

Elisha

The Prophet of God

Lesson 16 – A Death and a Resurrection
2Kings 13:14-21
Date: 7 October 2020 - Elisha20

1. Elisha is sick (v.14)

- a. Elisha is now an old man and he is sick. This sickness would lead to his death. We cannot tell exactly how old Elisha was, but assuming that he was at least 20 when God called him into the ministry and mentored by Elisha another 8-10 years, then perhaps another 50 years adding up all the kings that reigned during his ministry, he must have been at least 80. Some die suddenly and others suffer through a lingering sickness.
- b. Sickness and death are part of life in this sin-cursed world. It is unrealistic to think that our loved ones or we will not one day get sick and die. Sadly, knowing this never makes it any easier when it comes.

2. King Joash of Israel visited Elisha (v.14)

- a. Joash, king of Israel, was not a godly king (2Ki 13:10-11).
- b. Joash actually went to visit Elisha on his sick bed.
 - 1) He wept over him.
 - 2) He chanted, *"O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof."*
- c. He did have respect for Elisha the prophet of God. Spurgeon once said, *"Dear friends, let us seek so to live that even ungodly men may miss us when we are gone."*
- d. David Guzik states, *"Elisha said these words to Elijah at the end of the elder prophet's days on this earth. When he said this to Elijah in 2Ki 2:12, he recognized the true strength of Israel. He knew that the strength of Israel was really in the presence of the prophet of God. Now Joash sees the same strength slipping from this earth and mourns it."*
- e. Though Joash respected Elisha as a mighty, spiritual warrior in Israel, he did not allow the preaching of Elisha to turn his heart to the Lord. It is hypocritical if we praise godly preachers and then fail to live the messages that we heard them preach.

3. A prophetic message (v.15-17)

- a. Elisha told Joash to pick up a bow and arrows. This he did. Elisha was about to give him a prophetic message through an illustration.
- b. Sick old Elisha placed his hands on the king's hands.
- c. He told the king to open the window and shoot an arrow. As he did, Elisha said that it pictured the LORD's deliverance from Syria. Elisha

predicted that he would smite Syria in Aphek. The location of Aphek is uncertain, but it was probably near the Sea of Galilee. Some place it on the west, others place it on the east.

4. A second prophetic message (v.18-19)

- a. Elisha told the king to take the arrows. He obeyed. Then he told him to strike them on the ground. This he did three times.
- b. Since he **only** hit the ground **three** times, Elisha was angry with him and limited his prophecy to only three victories over Syria.
- c. This is somewhat of a mystery to us. How was King Joash to know that he was to hit the floor more than three times? Perhaps this was a common way of prophets making predictions. Perhaps God did not record all of their conversation for us to read. The king did not appear to get angry with Elisha, so perhaps he knew he had been wrong.
- d. It is possible that the king, not being very godly, lacked faith in Jehovah. On one occasion when Jesus healed two blind men who requested healing, He said, (Matthew 9:29) *"Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you."* I wonder how many blessings we have missed because of our lack of faith.

5. Elisha died (v.20)

- a. This great prophet, who had been a blessing to countless people during his ministry, died.
- b. We find no mention of friends weeping or of anyone giving him a special burial. It simply says he died and they buried him. Some of the most godly men and women in history have not received a special burial. Millions of God's greatest saints died as martyrs burned at the stake, fed to wild beasts, drowned, or died in a filthy prison cell (cf., Heb 11:35-38).

6. One more post-life miracle (v.21)

- a. This is one of the strangest miracles in the Bible. As people were burying a man, someone spied a band of Moabites preparing to attack. In haste, they tossed the dead man into Elisha's grave. The moment the dead man touched Elisha's bones, the man came back to life.
- b. Once again, the Lord was reminding these backsliding people of His great power. Can you imagine the shock of his friends? For the remainder of his days until he died again, that man was a living testimony of God's great power. He was also a reminder of Elisha's powerful ministry.
- c. Remembering the godly lives and ministries of former saints is helpful to us today as well. We and our children need to read more biographies of Christian missionaries like Carey, Judson, Taylor, Elliot and others.